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## **Statewide Coalition Announces Broad Opposition To Latest Ballot Initiative**

### **Warns Citizens that this Borrowed Idea Harms Missouri's Economic Development & Vital State Services**

**April 12, 2006** – “Partners to Protect Missouri’s Future,” a coalition of 37 business, education, health and human services, and faith-based organizations today announced statewide opposition to a proposed Constitutional amendment which would severely damage Missouri’s economic development and ability to fund basic services.

Representatives of the coalition spoke at events in St. Louis, Jefferson City and Kansas City on Wednesday and urged Missouri voters to learn about the proposed Amendment to Missouri’s Constitution. “This is of critical importance to our state’s future. We must reject this Amendment to ensure that Missouri is able to provide vital services such as healthcare and education and can continue to promote economic development,” said Amy Blouin, Executive Director, the Missouri Budget Project, a member organization of Partners to Protect Missouri’s Future.

At issue is the initiative titled, “Constitutional Amendment to Add a New Article XIV – Pertaining to Finance and Spending.” Petitions for this initiative are being circulated in Missouri to collect voter signatures. If sufficient valid signatures are submitted to the Secretary of State’s office by May 9, the measure would appear on the November, 2006 ballot in Missouri.

The Missouri Budget Project, a statewide nonprofit fiscal policy organization, released a new report that analyzes the proposed New Article XIV and its potential impact on Missouri. It makes three central points:

1. Proposed Article XIV is almost identical to Colorado’s “Taxpayers’ Bill of Rights” (TABOR) amendment that was enacted in 1992 and suspended by Colorado voters in November, 2005; both contain the same central provisions
2. In Colorado, TABOR led to reductions in health, education, public safety and transportation services. The proposed new Article XIV would have similar consequences for public services in Missouri .
3. In Colorado, the business community took the lead in campaigning for the suspension of TABOR because they realized that their state’s economic future was at great risk. Similarly, Missouri’s opportunities for economic development and innovation would be hampered by New Article XIV if it were enacted.

The Missouri Budget Project analysis, *Race to the Bottom Proposed "TABOR" Amendment Would Devastate Missouri Economic Development & Basic Services*, is available at [www.protectmo.org](http://www.protectmo.org) and [www.mobudget.org](http://www.mobudget.org).

Coloradans encouraged Missourians to learn from the negative impact of their state's TABOR:

- Toni Larson, Executive Director of Independent Higher Education of Colorado, explained, "This initiative in Missouri is a bad idea – you don't have to wonder what it would do your state. All you have to do is look at what it did to us in Colorado. It hurt education, health care, universities, and roads. It did nothing for Colorado's economy and had led to more government bureaucracy and hundreds of lawsuits. Our state's fiscal policy is determined more by lawsuits instead of by legislation. This idea is a proven failure – Missouri should not repeat Colorado's mistake."
- John Singletary, a rancher, Colorado farmer and real estate developer, compared the proposed New Article XIV to Colorado's TABOR by stating that, "You can put lipstick on a pig but it is still a pig. No matter what they call it or how they explain it, this is the same bad idea. Don't be fooled."